

allusion. Stupidity is always funny. Everything which breaks over the social taboo is funny. A violation of propriety, accidental disorder of the dress, grotesque postures, vulgar gestures of derision or defiance, blows, painful accidents and mishaps,—if not too serious,— deformations of the body (humpbacks), epithets and nicknames, slang and other abuses of language (like mispronunciation by foreigners), vituperation, caricature and burlesque of respectable types like the pedant, dandy, Puritan, imbecile, or the rich and great, always raise a laugh in the crowd and are relished by the crowd. They are constant elements of farce and fun. They have been so for three thousand years. Jugglery and feats of strength and skill excite wonder until they become familiar. They are proofs of individual capacity. They do not give amusement like the points which have just been mentioned and which have been repeated to generation after generation. The crowd always delights in any degradation of the things which the selected classes prefer and try to impose on all. They rejoice to see the restrictions trampled upon which they hear preached as the rules of life. In opera bouffe classical heroes, gods of the classical mythology, royalty, nobles of the mediaeval type, feudalism, dominies, are turned to ridicule. The crowd worships its heroes fanatically while they are in fashion, but it likes to turn about and roll them in the mud of satire, in order to teach them who made them and how easily it can unmake them. Aristophanes derided all which was serious in the Athenian social system. Long before Don Quixote was written chivalry was treated with derision. Satire is a

reversal of respect
and admiration.

627. The popular taste. Realism.
Conventionality. Satire.
That which is realistic and graphic appeals to the
popular and
uneducated taste, not that which is conventional,
regulated, and
refined according to rule and standard. That which
is realistic
reproduces all the facts of life. If the mirror is
held up to
nature it will show some nasty things. The social
taboos began
in superstitious fear, but they formed a series of
conventional
folkways under which some acts and facts of life
were veiled
from sight, knowledge, speech, and publicity.
Other lesser